

# Let Pos staff decide on repayment: Dr M

By SHARIFF HAMID

THE staff of Pos Malaysia should decide for themselves whether to contribute to Pos Malaysia's share of the repayment to victims of the MIDFCCS refund cheques fraud.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday it is wrong for the union to fix an amount for its members to pay, as it will burden them. Pos Malaysia staff can pay for the cheque fraud individually and at their own will.

"If they agree to pay according to the amount fixed by the union, they should do it on a voluntary basis. We must praised them for their involvement in the payment.

"This is a good sign and it shows that civil servants, especially the postal staff, are responsible workers on whom the public can count on," he told newsmen after launching the Mauludur Rasul gathering at Merdeka Square in Kuala Lumpur.

The Prime Minister also said taxi operators in the country should not increase fares due to the minimal rise in petroleum prices recently.

He said taxi operators should study the reasons for their increasing operation costs and find ways to reduce it and should not blame the increase on higher petroleum prices, as that is only a part of their operational costs.

Mahathir said the government's decision not to increase taxi fares was for the benefit of the taxi opera-



□ DR MAHATHIR

tors, to make the service attractive.

"Taxi operators can expect to earn better revenue if their service is cheap and more people can make use of the facility. Anyway, there is no reason for a rise in prices for goods or services every time petroleum prices increase," he said, pointing out that prices do not fall when petroleum prices go down.

Mahathir said the nation will face difficulty if the prices of certain goods and services go up whenever there is a price increase in petroleum.

"We should emulate Japan; the prices of its services and manufacturing goods were not increased unnecessarily although there have been increases in pe-

troleum prices every now and then.

"This has made Japan more efficient and competitive in the international market," he added.

He said Malaysia can attract bigger markets worldwide for its products and services if they are cheap and competitive. "There is no point increasing prices and make our products less competitive," he said.

On the use of the English in advertisements, especially on television, Mahathir said there is no harm as it is an important language after Bahasa Malaysia.

He said Malaysians should not be emotional on the usage of other languages, especially English, as the nation needs them to progress. Moreover, the usage of these languages will not affect the national language.

"English is important as it is an international language, which we have to use to communicate with our counterparts overseas and as a medium to attract investors.

"We must not be fanatic and emotional ... by accusing those who communicate in English as not nationalistic. The complaints on the use of English have been ridiculous lately, as it even involved ministers' speeches which needed to be delivered in English at international functions," he added.

Mahathir said the Government is prepared to review the screening of advertisements in English on television, but it will be carried out reasonably.